

## 1992 — A Survey

The inauguration of the King Olav V Chair in Scandinavian-American Studies, November 6-7, was the event of the year, an event celebrated jointly by St. Olaf College and the NAHA. The proceedings of this conference, a book of 228 pages, recently distributed to the members, will testify to the quality and character of that symposium. The inauguration attracted lively publicity at home and in Norway. Though activated, the chair is not yet fully endowed and we must continue to press for more funds.

### A New Home

Of historic significance, too, is that the NAHA moved into new and attractive quarters in June of 1992. The space includes four spacious offices, a work room, and shelves for our manuscript collection. Our books, periodicals and newspapers remain merged with the college library holdings. The NAHA is a component of a larger section of the library called "Special Collections." Our immediate neighbors are the St. Olaf College Archives and the Kierkegaard Library. We share a common lounge and conference room.

### Archives

The Archives are in excellent shape. Forrest Brown, now in his third year as curator, has processed nearly all of the backlog that piled up during the period we had no archivist. But work is never finished when archives function as they should, because acquisitions will keep pace with, or even exceed what a curator can process. Visitors to the archives progressively take up more of the archivist's time. A high percentage of them seek help on their family histories.

### Miscellaneous

The NAHA offices have entered the computer age. The editor, archivist and the assistant secretary now each have one. The printer is shared by all. The NAHA has for many years enjoyed limited computer services from the college computer center, but this will now be phased out.

\*\*\*

New investment policies were enacted in 1992. In the past our funds were invested in government securities only. With the recent collapse of interest rates, the executive committee chose to diversify, aiming at capital growth as well as income. Our funds are in the custody of First Trust, St. Paul, and First Asset Management plans our investment strategy.

\*\*\*

The raising of funds for the chair absorbed most of the available energies of the executive committee and staff in 1992. This may explain why after many years of steady membership growth, we barely held our own with a net increase of seven. A more complete membership report is given elsewhere.

\*\*\*

Book sales amounted to \$5,816. Libraries (a major customer) throughout our country have budget problems and many have cancelled their standing orders in recent years. Our editions run at 2,000 copies, leaving 300 copies available for general sales, a number so small that even moderate advertising would consume any profit. On the positive side, we need to keep in mind that members buy our books through their dues. When we increase our membership we also increase our book sales.

\*\*\*

Many have contributed to a successful year. A few names must be mentioned: Odd S. Lovoll as editor managed our publication program and planned the chair inauguration seminar and festivities; Forrest Brown cared for the archives and gave generously of his time to researchers in need of help; and, Ruth Crane managed the day to day administrative work with aplomb, efficiency and accuracy. They make up our human assets. Take away their services, the NAHA, as we now know it, would cease to exist.

## Membership Figures for 1992

	Jan. 1, 1992	New Members	Can- celled	Trans. In	Trans. Out	Dec. 31, 1992	Gain Loss
Associate	713	+54	-69	+40	-31	707	-6
Sustaining	308	+18	-13	+32	-45	300	-8
Patron	43	+6	-5	+6	-12	38	-5
Life	668	+16	—	+10	-15	679	+11
Deceased Life	168	—	—	+15	—	183	+15
Totals	1,900	94	87	103	103	1,907	+7

The transfer figures cited above reflect movement from one membership category to another. Of the 88 transfers in 1992, 46 members lowered their membership status and 42 opted for a higher level. Because life membership dues are allocated to the Rølvaag Memorial Fund (a permanent fund), life members remain on the NAHA membership roster even after death.

## Bequests and Gifts

We have received notice that the late Rolf Erickson stipulated that the NAHA should receive \$10,000 from his estate. The Will further stated that this amount should be added to the endowment fund that supports our archives.

The late Thor Ohme, a life member since 1942, left a bequest of \$1,000 which was allocated to the Bjork Chair Fund, as was a gift of \$1,000 from Marion and Lila Nelson. Marion Nelson is a member of the Board. Lawrence Hauge bought five life memberships (\$1,000) in one "fell swoop," as the saying goes, one for each of his children. May Erickson, Ohme, the Nelsons and Hauge serve as role models for many.

### The Kenneth O. Bjork Chair Fund

A total of \$66,773 was raised in 1992, and \$8,365 have come in as of March 31, 1993. The fund stood at \$330,000 at the close of the year. Two bequests, Harry Williams and Leif Melgaard, accounted for more than \$50,000 of the amount accrued in 1992.

Those who contributed \$100 or more to the Bjork Chair Fund in 1992 are mentioned below: \$2,000—Harriet Hustvedt, Alfred D. Olson. \$1,000—Kjell Fjortoft, John A. Herseth, Edvard Jorgenson, Grethe Seim, Claire and Gladys Strommen. \$750—John T. Erickson (includes American Standard Foundation matching grant). \$500—Norwegian-American Technical Society. \$350—William and Jan Korsvik. \$300—Julien H. Collins, Amanda Duff, Eunice Thompson. \$250—Sons of Norway, International. \$200—A.L. Laboratories, James A. Halls, Evy Johnson, Judith Torvik. \$150—Ole V. Gross. \$100—Walter Barthold, Patrick Costello, Corrine Davidson, Karen Davidson, Reidar and Chrisma Dittmann, Frederic Giere, Finn Haug, Freda Hovden, Jostein Molde, Nils William Olsson, Per Øverland, Carol Palrud, Wayne Rohne, SAS, Chicago. Gifts less than \$100 amounted to \$1,800.

### To Date in 1993

\$1,000—Robert C. Elmen, Harriet Hustvedt, Lila and Marion Nelson, Alfred D. Olson. \$750—John T. Erickson (includes American Standard Foundation matching gift). \$500—Amanda Duff. \$300—Wayne A. Rohne (final payment on pledge). \$100—Louis H. Blumengarten, Russell W. Fridley, Freda Hovden, Mary A. Olsen, Nils William Olsson.

## More Johnsons Than Olsons?

David and Kay Dole used their computer when they processed close to 29,000 new entries for our Rowberg Biographical File. Of these entries there were 1,532 Johnsons, 971 Olsons, 880 Nelsons, 680 Hansons, 559 Petersons, 394 Ericksons and 373 Thompsons. Two farm names came in eighth and ninth with 279 Bergs and 225 Lees, followed by 217 Carlsons and 184 Knutsons. In twelfth position were 167 Hagens, followed by 164 Jacobsons and Swensons.

We can also learn something about the first names that Norwegian Americans gave to their children (second and third generation) roughly between the years 1900-1925. The ten most popular given names, male and female, are: 1. John and Clara, 2. Arthur and Anna, 3. Oscar and Mabel, 4. Clarence and Myrtle, 5. Carl and Olga, 6. Henry and Pearl, 7. George and Alice, 8. Melvin and Esther, 9. Robert and Ruth, 10. Elmer and Ida.

## New Board Members: Tomson and Fjelde

Acting on behalf of the Executive Board, the Executive Committee filled two board vacancies. Appointed were O. Jay Tomson and E.T. Fjelde. Both will stand for re-election to three-year terms at the triennial meeting this coming October. A brief introduction of O. Jay Tomson is cited

below. A statement on E.T. Fjelde will appear in our next newsletter.

O. Jay Tomson has been active in banking and finance since his graduation from St. Olaf College in 1958, save perhaps for stints of graduate study at Iowa State University in 1962 and at Rutgers University in 1968. His leadership has been strongly felt in financial institutions and organizations, both local and national in scope. For example, he is a past president of the Independent Bankers Association of America, and is a member of the Advisory Board of the *Northwestern Financial Review*. He is currently President of the First Citizens Financial Corporation at Charles City, Iowa, and is chairman of the board of each of its four subsidiary national banks. His interests go beyond finance. He is currently Vice Chairman of the Board of Regents of Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa. To O. Jay Tomson, welcome!

## Twenty-Third Triennial Meeting

Our next triennial meeting will take place Saturday, October 16, 1993, at West River Point, 1315 West River Road North, Minneapolis.

The general business meeting, which consists of reports from the officers to the members and the election of a new executive board for the coming triennium, will be followed by an evening banquet. We are pleased to announce that a distinguished member, Walter F. Mondale, former U.S. senator and vice president, will be the speaker for the evening.

A later newsletter will provide precise details as to locale, time, reservations etc. But, do mark your calendar now!

## Looking Ahead

Editor Odd S. Lovoll made known his publication plans to the Executive Committee which met on February 20. These plans take us into 1998. Lovoll emphasized that some titles are tentative and that publication dates might be switched from one publication to another due to unforeseen developments.

The first publication for 1993, *Nordics in America: The Future of Their Past* was distributed to the members in late March and early April. Any member who did not receive a copy, should report this to the secretary.

*A New Land, New Lives: Scandinavian Immigrants in the Pacific Northwest*, edited and translated by Janet E. Rasmussen, is scheduled to come out in October. This work consists of a compilation of personal accounts that have been transcribed from earlier tape recorded oral narratives. The covering term for a work like this is

"Oral History." This will be a joint publication: The NAHA and the University of Washington Press.

*Material Culture and Peoples' Art of Norwegians in America* is scheduled for July, 1994. Marion Nelson, former director of Vesterheim Museum, is the managing editor for a compilation of articles that fall under the heading of material culture. This will be the only book published in 1994. There are two reasons. The first, our editor will have a sabbatical leave with special assignments in Norway. The second, two publications per year exceed our income from dues, and reserve funds are being depleted.

Two publications are, however, scheduled for 1995 and 1996. Millard L. Gieske's and Steven J. Keillor's *A Biography of Senator Knute Nelson* is planned for the spring of 1995 and volume 34 of *Studies* for the fall. As was made known in an earlier newsletter, Gieske died before his manuscript was complete. That Keillor was willing to complete the task is our good fortune.

*A History of the Norwegian Brooklyn Colony* by David Mauk should see publication in the spring of 1996. This work will be for Brooklyn what *A Century of Urban Life* is for Chicago. Because 1996 marks the 100th anniversary of Rølvaag's emigration to the U.S., a Rølvaag Symposium is planned. Solveig Zempel is preparing *Omkring fædrearven* for publication under the title *Ole E. Rølvaag's Concerning the Ancestral Heritage*. According to plan this book should come out in October of 1996.

*A History of Norwegian-American Literature* by Orm Øverland is the only work scheduled for 1997. Again budgetary reasons enter as a factor. In addition, this book will be a large one.

*Studies*, vol. 35, should come out in the spring of 1998. One of several prospects, for which there are as yet no finished manuscripts, will in all likelihood constitute the second publication for that year.

There is no dearth of material to publish. The publication pace, however, must be geared to what revenue will allow. Moreover, the editor and his assistant must go through each manuscript sentence by sentence before they are sent to the printers. This takes time.

## Random News

- Received from Claire H. Groth, *Pioneers*, a photocopy of a 120 page book about the early settlement in the Red River Valley. Published by the Old Settlers Memorial Monument Association. No date, no author. Three histories of Mitchell County, Iowa, the home of the St. Ansgar settlement. A historical atlas of Iowa, and bound volumes of *Bud og hilsen*, *For Gammel og ung*, *Kvinden og Hjemmet*, and *Farmeren*.

The journals were welcome additions because our earlier files were incomplete.

- Received from Harriet A. Rye Madson her *150 Years in America: The Story of the Gravum-Ouverson/Strømme-Halvorson Families*. Photos, maps, charts, hard cover, 459 pages. The above mentioned families came from Telemark and Voss in 1843 and 1944, settling at Koshkonong, Wisconsin. It is a superior piece of work.

- Received from Arnold M. Heggeland a photocopy of the *St. Matthew's Norwegian Lutheran Church of Klondike*, Richfield Township, Ward County, Wisconsin, 1891 to 1941.

- Received from Gloria Vatne her *Descendants of Guro Henriksdatter Koldestad (1820-1889) and Joachim Frederick Weltzin (1820-1905)*. Photos, maps, name index, spiral bound, 133 pages, 1993.

- Received from Stephen E.D. Simon, his *Sjur Anfinson Reque and Guri Dagestad Reque: Their Descendants*. Typescript reproduction, spiral bound, photos and maps, 52 pages, 1992. The Reques left Voss, Norway in 1880 and settled in Koshkonong, Wisconsin.

- Received from Belinda Finlay her *The Descendants of Steffen Olai Berentsen from Helgås Farm and Anne Marie Andreasdatter from Ramstad Farm, Norway* [Sunnfjord]. Typescript reproductions, maps, charts, clippings, legal documents, photos, name index, 300 pages, 1992. Three sons from this family emigrated in 1906.

- Received from Mildred Hernke Ohnstad her *Hernke: Ernest and Mathilde's Descendants*. Typescript reproduction, photos, charts, and maps, 150 pages.

- Received from Marilyn D. Somdahl her *Sigdalslaget Album 1991-1992: Descendants of Immigrants with Roots in Sigdal, Eggedal and Krødsherad*. Photos, membership lists, 29 pages, 1992.

- Received from Alf A. Swenson three titles: *100 Year Celebration in Norway* (46 pages); *My Father's Brother in Norway* (50 pages); *Un-*

*usual Ancestor Stories* (101 pages). Spiral bound, photos, maps charts.

- Received from Marion Matson, *Slekten Redalen 1425-1986* by Torgrim Redalen. Photos, maps, index, hard cover, 91 pages, published in Norway, 1986. The American side of the family (pages 61-91) is treated in English.

- Received from Barbara Levorsen Quinn her *Levorsen Family History*. Typescript reproduction, photos, maps, charts, and clippings, 172 pages, 1992. Amund and Ingeborg Levorsen left Numedal in 1868. After a brief stay in Wisconsin they took land near Pelican Rapids, Minnesota, and resettled in Virginia 30 years later.

- Received from Karl Siewers his *Far Flung Norwegian Families: Siewers/Brandt*. Typescript reproduction, photos, maps, letters, documents, 154 pages, 1992. This work supplements an earlier volume.

- Received from Wally Toensing his compilation of Norwegian Americans who served in Minnesota Regiments during the Civil War. The list, which contains some 800 names, identifies military unit, home address, and burial site in cases of national cemeteries. Typescript, 32 unbound pages.

- Book: *Fra Amerika til Norge: Norske utvandrerbrev 1858-1868*, vol. II, published by Orm Øverland and Steinar Kjærheim, index, hard cover, 578 pages. Contains 184 letters in chronological order. Fifteen letters, 1836-1857, not included in vol. I are appended.

- Received from Mrs. Frances Jeffers her *Norwegian Immigrants: Ole Helgeson Bakken and Ingeborg Gautesdatter Bakke*. Typescript reproduction, 50 pages, 1993. Bakken left Hadeland in 1854, married Ingeborg from Aurland in 1860 and settled in Iowa.

- Received *Prairie Summer: Settlement on the Goose* (1989) and *Prairie Summer: Mourning Dove* (1991), two plays by Marie Gleason that deal with the early Norwegian settlers in the Goos River region, North Dakota, Encore Performance Publishing, Orem, Utah.

---

NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION  
St. Olaf College  
Northfield, Minnesota 55057

NON-PROFIT ORG.

U.S. Postage

PAID

Northfield, Minn.

Permit No. 107